

April 4, 2000

Dear Healthcare Provider:

SUBJECT: MEDICAL ALERT- EMERGING ANTIBIOTIC-RESISTANT *NEISERIA GONORRHEA*- *Patient Management and Reporting*

Fluoroquinolone antibiotics, such as ciprofloxacin and ofloxacin, should no longer be used to treat gonorrhea infections in Hawaii. The Department of Health has identified a marked increase in the prevalence of quinolone-resistant gonorrhea in Hawaii.

Ciprofloxacin-resistant (Cipro-R) *N. gonorrhea* increased from 1.4% of positive gonorrhea isolates in 1997 to 9.5% in 1999. Quinolone-resistant isolates are known to be endemic in Asia. Fifty percent of the patients with Cipro-R gonorrhea identified in 1998 and 1999 reported travel to Asia, or had sex partners with such travel, while the remaining 50% reported no such exposure. This suggests that some patients may have acquired Cipro-R gonorrhea in Hawaii.

In addition to Cipro-R *N. gonorrhea*, we have recently identified a patient from Hawaii with a gonorrhea isolate with MIC>8 to azithromycin. This is the first known reported case of azithromycin-resistant gonorrhea. Most of the gonorrhea isolates in Hawaii have an MIC <0.25 to azithromycin.

The Hawaii Department of Health recommendations are outlined on the other side of the page.

We appreciate your continued support in the prevention and control of STD in Hawaii. If you have any questions or need more information regarding this advisory, please call Roy Ohye or Venie Lee of the STD Prevention Program at (808) 733-9281.

Sincerely,

PHILIP P. BRUNO, D.O., F.A.C.P.,

Communicable Disease Division

Chief

Attachment:

STD Case Reporting Form

1998 CDC STD Treatment Guideline Summary (modified for Hawaii)

The Hawaii Department of Health recommends the following for managing patients in Hawaii with gonorrhea:

1. **Diagnosis:**

Please consider gonococcal infection in the differential diagnosis of patients presenting with presumptive urethritis or cervicitis. If the patient presents with presumptive gonorrhea infection, a gonorrhea culture or genprobe test is recommended. Antibiotic susceptibility tests should be done on positive gonorrhea cultures.

2. **Treatment:**

For patients with uncomplicated gonorrhea infection in Hawaii the recommended treatment is one of the following antibiotics:

Ceftriaxone 125 mg IM in a single dose

Cefixime 400 mg orally in a single dose

Spectinomycin 2 Gm IM in a single dose may be used as an alternative for those unable to tolerate a cephalosporin antibiotic

Routine dual therapy for possible co-infection with chlamydia is recommended with one of the following antibiotics:

Doxycycline 100 mg orally twice/day for 7 days

Azithromycin 1 Gm orally in a single dose

3. **Reporting:**

Gonorrhea is a reportable disease. Please immediately notify the Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Prevention Program Office of any case of documented gonorrhea infection. The number to report any STD reportable disease is (808) 733-9281. In addition, the Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) are available to assist in patient education and partner counseling and referral. For assistance please contact the DIS Supervisor at (808) 733-9281. For all cases of resistant-strain gonorrhea infections, a DIS will be contacting your patient for additional information associated with the resistant infection.

4. **Counseling:**

We request that you routinely ask patients with gonorrhea, within the last 60 days of diagnosis:

- a. Name(s) and locating information of patient's sex partner for referral and medical management
- b. Where they or their sex partners have traveled
- c. What type of and reason for any antibiotic used

This information may be used by the STD Program Office to determine if patients acquired their infection locally or abroad, and to evaluate other factors possibly associated with resistant infection.

As for patients with any STD, counsel patients about the risks of unprotected sexual relations and, for travelers, about the high prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases in many countries. In addition, encourage all patients diagnosed with an STD to undergo testing for HIV infection.